

Tidy Towns 1997

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **DUNLAVIN**
County : **WICKLOW**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 16-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	34
The Built Environment	40	26	24
Landscaping	40	30	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	23	22
Tidiness	20	14	13
Residential Areas	30	16	15
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28	28
General Impression	10	7	6
TOTAL MARK	300	198	188

Dunlavin, County Wicklow

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your completed questionnaire and map which was very helpful during the course of adjudication. The adjudicators commend that no advertising is taking place on the approach roads; this is a sign of good commitment and community effort. The adjudicators look forward to the submission of your five year plan, which has still not been received. You have a very well laid out town, with some very attractive features. Congratulations on the work done to the Market House. The visibility of the Irish language was an emphasis in this years adjudication; in this regard it was good to see one or two premises using Irish. In preparing your plan, try to incorporate the historical and cultural uniqueness of the town into the overall Tidy Towns development plan. Overall, you have a very good developmental approach.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The adjudicators would firstly like to congratulate you on the work that has been completed in the restoration of the Market House, with new cobble locking noted around it. This is an excellent project and congratulations to those involved; it really enhances the appearance of the village and the built environment in the town. One outstanding matter that needs to be taken care of is the under-grounding of cables, which take from the overall visual appearance on the approaches to this building. The grounds of the Fire Station were well presented. It was good to see many premises utilising flower boxes this year, it gives a very pretty appearance to the town, for example, Teach de Gras. Deering Insurance Brokers office was also very good. Try to paint the gable end of Teach de Gras, otherwise a good presentation. The Garda Station could be greatly enhanced. It is disappointing to see unique buildings with PVC, try to use more traditional window frames. All the school grounds were very well presented, as was the Church of Ireland and the Catholic Church. The Post Office sign needs to be repainted. The AIB was very well presented, as was Matt Owens. Outside Spar was litter free, but try to resurface the area. Burkes with a new shopfront, well done. Try to finish the cobble locking near the 1798 monument. Premises that could be improved include the Village Take Away and the Furniture Shop. The entrance into the GAA Club is very disappointing, with litter noted; gates needed to be painted and weeds were noted along the car park. In relation to derelict buildings, it is good to see the improvements taking place in this regard; try to continue this as they, inevitably, take from the overall appearance of the town. There was very good effort noted in the use of flowers on a number of buildings, for example, around the Post Office. Overall, while improvements are noted, there is room for greater attention in a few key areas.

LANDSCAPING

Overall, there was an excellent presentation noted throughout Dunlavin this year, congratulations. You have placed considerable attention to good presentation of your landscaped

areas and congratulations to those involved in maintaining these areas. An excellent presentation was noted at Bunditch and also after Rose Garden, well done. It is also nice to note the tombstones which are very informative and add to the heritage significance of the town. Nice landscaped area was noted outside the industrial units, which is well maintained, and nice shrubbery was noted at the Crosskeys approach road. The green was very well presented this year, and litter free. The grounds to the Secondary School (Community College) are also beautifully maintained, with new planting noted. The adjudicators also commend the excellent visual impression created at Cow Green with seating, tree planting, well maintained grass and the removal of weeds. An excellent presentation under this category.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The adjudicators look forward to your proposals for developments under this category. You have, up to now, placed considerable emphasis on this through good use of tree planting and protection of hedgerows, well done in this regard. Try to involve the schools in wildlife projects, or even school garden projects. Conserving nature is a new venture for many towns and can appear daunting at first. The adjudicators recognise that environmental programmes can take time to get up and running and even longer to assess their success. This section of the report requires an involvement of all groups, including schools in the town. The emphasis is on the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and the environment. Woodlands, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, open spaces, graveyards and walls are important habitats. The committee needs to identify the habitats in their area and then determine the appropriate actions to conserve and enhance these habitats. Guidelines in the Tidy Towns book offers other suggestions as to the type of initiatives you might undertake. Is there a local wildlife expert, or a member of the community with experience in this area, that your committee can draw on? In preparing an environmental programme for the village, there should be a year-round participation in environmental protection and promotion involving all members of the community and providing access for all. The next step is to identify what habitats are in your area - are these woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, or other habitats such as cemeteries, walls etc. Prepare a survey and map, showing the areas of wildlife importance and areas of potential importance. Other steps involved in the preparation of the environmental programme for Dunlavin would include identification of species list of the flora and fauna in the area; preparation of a wildlife management plan as part of the area development plan; work to be carried out including conservation projects, wildlife gardens, areas of conservation, access, tree planting, information areas etc. This must be carried out in sympathy with the local landscape and must not be overwhelming visually, or environmentally.

LITTER CONTROL

Overall, litter control throughout Dunlavin is good, with only a few bad spots noted. All around Cow Green and the approach from Bunditch was very well presented, well done. Outside shops were

also litter free, which is also a very good indication. Two negative places where litter was noted was within Church Hill and at the entrance to the Council Yard which was particularly bad up near the school and which is very disappointing to note. Otherwise, a good performance, apart from these two areas.

TIDINESS

Try to remove gravel at kerbing, which can take from the otherwise tidy appearance, for example, on the Crosskeys Road. Graffiti was also noted at the entrance to Church Hill. Also, the under-grounding of wires would greatly improve the appearance of tidiness throughout the village. Overall, there is quite a good presentation and visual effect created by wide streets, with lack of litter; painted premises and nicely landscaped areas.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

An excellent presentation was noted at the green house opposite the Court House, well done. Other examples noted included Brescia Cottage, which was excellent and College View, which was also very good. The derelict house being restored near Cow Green is a welcomed improvement, try to continue this. Sprinklings of litter were noted at Church Hill, but improvements were also noted with tree planting and seating at the entrance into the park - there is a need for resurfacing here. A new telephone kiosk is also needed. Some improvements were noted but litter is still evident - try to overcome this for next year. Church Terrace, good individual efforts were noted here. There was also excellent individual efforts noted throughout the town but continued improvements are needed on Church Hill.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach road from Hollywood, the verges had a rough cut, but it was okay. The approach from Naas road/Station Road, was excellent with grass neatly cut; tree planting was noted, but try to watch the weeds along the path. Approaching Dunlavin from Crosskeys, the Beech Trees were looking very well, and grass verges had been neatly maintained. At the 30 MPH sign, try to minimise the use of weed killer. A nice new wall was noted on the right hand side, but try to clean/replace the Dunlavin sign. On the Sparrow Road approach, a new footpath was noted. On Kilcullen Street, the trees are coming on very well, creating a very good impression as one passes through the town. Cobble locking was noted at Bunditch, which is very nice, but is not yet complete. The Milltown Road was also well presented. Overall, a very good performance under this section.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Dunlavin is a very attractive town, and one which the residents should be proud of. You have made a very good impression with the adjudicators in the past, and try to continue this. Your attention to landscaping and tidiness is excellent. Try to concentrate on buildings, which, because of their location, for example, on corners or as one enters the town have an important role to play in creating a positive visual impact. There is no reason why Dunlavin cannot win the Tidy Towns Competition - so

good luck.